


Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board

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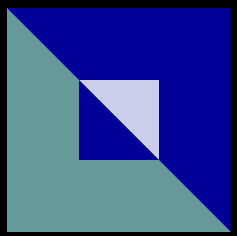
ALABAMA ONSITE
WASTEWATER BOARD

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www.aowb.state.al.us

ONSITE SEWAGE RULES TRAINING

Knowing that the new Onsite Rules would be effective March 19, 2006, the Soil & Onsite Sewage Branch began the planning for a training schedule during the fall of 2005. Beginning in January, three day training sessions took place for the county environmentalists. A total of 5 – three days session where held during January and February with over 170 total attendees. At the end of the sessions, the environmentalists were tested on the new rules. The sessions were taught by members of the Division of Community Environmental Protection.

After the training of staff, plans were made for the training of the onsite professionals throughout the state. Each public health area contacted engineers, land surveyors, soil classifiers, geologists, developers, installers, tank manufacturers, developers and other interested parties within their respective area to gauge interest in attending training sessions. Numerous sessions were held throughout the state with presentations by Division, Area, and County staff.



AOWB

Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board

AOWB
April 2006

The AOWB quarterly meeting was held April 12th in Montgomery, AL with Chairperson Carolyn Gibson presiding. The minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved. Please visit our web site to read these minutes.

ELECTION OF NEW OFFICER

Mr. Jackie Holliday resigned as Treasurer and Mr. Chad Mercer was elected Treasurer. The elected officers for 2006 are as follows: Ms. Carolyn Gibson to serve as Chairperson Mr. Alton Williams to serve as Vice-Chairman; and Mr. Chad Mercer to serve as Treasurer

ADOPTION OF NEW RULE

The Board voted unanimously to adopt the new rule regarding the Advanced Installer II license. This rule will go into effect beginning January 1, 2007. More details by mail will follow.

Welcome New Licensees!

James Cornelius-Basic Installer, Mike Williams-Advanced Installer, Ernest Sweat-Advanced Installer, Ray Gore-Manufacturer, Cylinda Lancaster-Advanced Installer, Richard Kincaid-Pumper-Advanced Installer, Coy Carreher-Advanced Installer, Ira Parsons-Advanced Installer, Cordie Schmidt-Pumper, Robert Kilcrease-Basic Installer, Will Mattox-Advanced Installer, Jeff George-Pumper, Randall Hamner-Advanced Installer, Michael Ragland-Basic Installer, Billy Mercer-Basic Installer, Matthew Ray-Basic Installer, Steve Wade-Basic Installer, Hayward Vickery-Basic Installer, Charles Newman-Basic Installer, Sibley Higgins-Pumper, Jeff Alexander-Basic Installer, Robert Tolbert-Basic Installer, Brian Williams-Basic Installer, Terry Walls-Basic Installer, Ashton Parrish-Basic Installer, Norman Box-Basic Installer, Jerry Campbell-Basic Installer, Joseph Burroughs-Basic In-

staller, Bruce Wagner-Advanced Installer, Jimmy Burns-Basic Installer, Rickey Burt-Basic Installer, Robert Joiner-Pumper, Louis Vincent-Basic Installer, Kevin Barnett-Basic Installer, Bryan Judson-Basic Installer, Brandon Weldon-Basic Installer, Mark Hollands-worth-Basic Installer, Eddy Childress-Basic Installer, Chris Reese-Basic Installer, Gary Evans-Basic Installer, Jesse Talley-Basic Installer, Arthur Westbrook-Basic Installer

The AOWB would like to welcome these individuals to our industry. In the last 3 months each of them have completed their required training and successfully passed their exam.

Good Luck Licensees!

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QUARTERLY CALENDAR:

- July 25, 2006– AOWB Quarterly Board Meeting: 10:00 a.m., 400 South Union Street, 4th floor conference room
- May 29-Confederate Memorial Day-AOWB closed
- June 5-Jefferson Davis' Birthday-AOWB closed
- July 4-Independence Day-AOWB closed

The company strives to deliver more than it promises. A unit scheduled for 9 a.m. delivery may be there by 7 a.m. Staff may present a unit as having capacity for 500 guests when it really will accommodate 600 — that gives the customer a cushion.

More service, more income

The sales cycle for an upscale unit is more extensive than for a standard unit. “For construction or our film customers, they tell you what they want and where they want it. They know what it costs; they issue a purchase order, and you invoice for it,” Kenyon says.

On the other hand, special event customers get several telephone calls, a site visit or two, and a visit from the client to the company’s yard to view the units before making the decision. These customers want to know about color, size, weight, the unit’s ability to fit in a specific space, and its contrast with other décor.

It’s My Potty’s largest units are 18 feet long with two stalls on the women’s side and two stalls and a urinal on the men’s side. For a supplier, Paul is gravitating toward Jexcar, a British Columbia manufacturer that customizes units to withstand Canadian winter weather and builds them larger. The company also has several trailers from California-based NuConcepts.

While It’s My Potty doesn’t offer damage waivers, the company gets a certificate of insurance and a credit card security deposit from renters. The most common problem is people putting water bottles down the toilets. “It means dismantling all of the plumbing from the undercarriage in order to get that water bottle out,” Kenyon notes. Clients are billed up to \$500 to fix the problem.

Managing growth

Damage to units is not a major problem, but managing rapid growth has been. Even after the SARS scare in 2003, It’s My Potty grew by 57 percent. “That’s pretty hard to handle in terms of company management,” says Kenyon. The company until now has remained self-financed.

“We try not to rely on the banks or leasing companies too much so that we can stay liquid,” Kenyon says. Borrowing money to build the business while risking winter downtime does not appeal to him. While entertainment industry business continues almost year-round, special events drop off in winter.

One investment Kenyon considers necessary is units accessible to people with disabilities. Canada has no equivalent of the Americans with Disabilities Act, but It’s My Potty gets requests for wheelchair-accessible units.

In the future, Kenyon can envision the company operating internationally through franchising. He eventually would like to manufacture his own restroom trailers and customize them for the market.

In the meantime, Kenyon envisions continued demand for luxury trailers. At times, there are simply no workable alternatives. “A standard portable restroom will not do if the Governor General of our country may likely use it,” he says.

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Secret service

Kenyon prefers to swap clean units for dirty ones and service back at the company's lot rather than onsite. Because most events are short-term the company does not have large pump trucks. “For large-scale events, or events in which our units are boxed in, we'll service in the off-hours,” Kenyon says.

On one project, a university hosted three graduation ceremonies a day for nearly a week. “There were 1,400 students graduating, so we would service the units, then retreat to a parking lot a couple of blocks away where nobody could see us,” Kenyon says. “As soon as one ceremony was finished, we’d swoop down and pump them out while someone else was inside taking care of the aesthetics. We did that three times a day for five days.”

Clients want the company to be discreet about pumping. A 1,200-gallon tank (half freshwater and half waste) sits in an 18-foot panel truck (from Vacutrux). A technician pulls up to the site, rolls up the back door, pumps the unit, and closes the door.

Onsite, attendants dress to blend into the background. “Our customers want us to be understated, not front and center,” Kenyon says. For example, at a recent high-end wedding, the company’s signage was covered and replaced with old English script reading, “Ladies’ Restroom” and “Men’s Restroom.”

The attendants — two women and two men — were dressed in jackets, dress shoes and dress pants. After each guest used the facility, the attendants entered the unit, locked the door, wiped down all surfaces, and unlocked the door again.

Employee power

Employees respond to Kenyon’s approach, which is to empower the members of his team. “My employees, from the person who answers the telephone to the person who tenders the invoice, are empowered to make decisions in favor of the customer,” he says.

If that means voiding part of an invoice because a customer’s expectation was not met, the employee doesn’t have to check with a manager (but does have to rationalize the decision to Kenyon). Kenyon doesn’t relish reducing invoices, but he grants each employee that power in order to protect customer relationships.

The company deals with a group of event planners and caterers, each of whom may represent \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year in revenue. To insist that an invoice be paid in full even though there is a dispute may mean a loss of future bookings. “If we have made a mistake, or if our equipment hasn’t performed the way we said it would, we have an obligation to make it right,” Kenyon says.

To help them deliver the best customer service, employees take online courses through the American Rental Association and classroom training with videos from the ARA or the Rental Association of Canada. Beyond that, Kenyon provides mentoring. New employees ride with veterans for up to a month before going out on their own.

Kenyon also insists that the salesperson be onsite when units are delivered. “As good or bad communicators as we all are, inevitably there’s something left to chance when you hand it off to someone else,” he says. “So if you are the one making the commitment on behalf of the company, you had better be there on that day to make sure we fulfill our commitment.”



ENFORCEMENT OFFICER UPDATE

Mike Talley, our enforcement officer has been covering the entire State of Alabama since the resignation of Mr. Albert Jacobs. This quarter, there were 18 complaints, 9 were on licensees and 9 were on unlicensed individuals. 11 of those complaints have been closed, 6 are ongoing, there is 1 awaiting a court appearance. 1 arrest was made. Mike has made 77 goodwill visits, and has visited 6 health departments. He has conducted 2 manufacturing plant inspections.

HIRING OF ADDITIONAL ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

In January of 2006, the Board created a personnel committee to conduct the search for a new enforcement officer to be based in North Alabama. A register was pulled from the State Personnel Department, and 3 interviews were conducted. As all applicants were based South of Montgomery, the Board voted on April 12, 2006, to return the register to the State Personnel Department and request that the position be announced again. Any interested persons desiring to apply for the Licensing Compliance Field Officer position may contact the State Personnel Department at 334-242-3389 or you may visit their website at www.personnel.state.al.us.

DENIAL OF RENEWALS

The Board reviewed 3 licensees who wished to renew their license for 2006, as these individuals had not renewed in 2005, their request was denied. In order for them to become licensed again, they must begin the process over by attending training and taking the exam again. Please note: Section 34-21A-18(b)(c) Code of Alabama states: (b) Specific license renewal application forms and license renewal requirements shall be developed by the Board. License renewal requirements shall include, but not be limited to, continuing education and training requirements for each level of license and evidence of adequate bond. The license renewal application form shall be accompanied by all required documentation and renewal fees. The Board shall verify that the renewal applicant is a current licensee who is eligible for renewal before issuing a new license. (c) Failure to meet renewal requirements shall result in expiration and revocation of a license. Upon expiration of a license, the licensee’s name will be removed from the Board’s official list and the Alabama Department of Public Health and the appropriate local health authorities will be notified of the license expiration. A license which has expired for failure to renew may only be restored within one year from the date of expiration after application and payment of the license restoration fee established by the Board. Any license which has not been restored within one year following its expiration may not be renewed, restored, or reissued, and the holder may apply for and obtain a new license only upon compliance with all qualifications and requirements for the issuance of a new license.

Make note license’s can only be renewed for 1 year after they expire!

Whatever It Takes

It's My Potty builds a fast-growing luxury restroom business with complete attentiveness to customer needs and wishes

By Carol Brzozowski

Pumper Feature Story - April 2006

When a portable sanitation business brings in \$1 million a year and annual growth rates of 25 to 30 per-cent, something is going right. For Paul Kenyon, owner of It's My Potty VIP Portable Restrooms, success boils down to three ingredients: stellar customer service, empowered employees and an environmentally appropriate fleet.

Kenyon started It's My Potty in Toronto, Ontario, as a sideline to his other company, Absolute Location Support Services, which rents equipment to the film, television and commercial production industries. "As Toronto grew as a destination for film and television production, a lot of the talent coming here didn't like to make use of the traditional port-a-potty," Kenyon explains.

So he obliged by securing higher-end portable sanitation, and business took off. Business from the enter-tainment industry diminished after the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) scare in 2003, but the company continued to grow with special events and personal celebrations. These days, demand outstrips the company's supply of 30 restroom trailers. "We're soon to get six more, and there's no end in sight," says Kenyon.

It's My Potty often gets business because competitors don't have what customers want. The company once won a special event six hours away, in Ottawa, because the caterer organizing the event couldn't find an appropriate restroom trailer in that area.

Meeting customer desires

Kenyon regards customer service as the last bastion of competition. "If the customer calls at 3 a.m. and wants a roast beef sandwich on rye delivered to wherever they happen to be, we don't ask them any ques-tions — we bring it to them," Kenyon says. "That roast beef sandwich might cost them \$300, because we are neither a restaurant nor are we open at 3 a.m., but our customers are more concerned about getting what they want when they want it. The analogy is that they are less concerned about price."

To that end, Kenyon carries an emergency pager for middle-of-the-night calls. He pays employees who respond to off-hours calls double time at a minimum of four hours. "Sometimes that's a cost you can charge back to a customer, but in many cases, it isn't," he says. "Those are just the things we have to do in order to satisfy the customer."

Educating customers on the added value of VIP units is key. Kenyon invites those who have booked with other companies to visit his yard, where his units are on display. Each time, he says, "The argument about price goes away. They cancel their reservation with the other company and book it here."

Though Kenyon prefers understated décor for his units, he adds extra touches when appropriate, such as complimentary bouquets of flowers for weddings. "I figure they are paying a premium price for a restroom, so we'll happily put in a little bouquet of flowers," he says. "It adds a little bit of aroma to the air, and it's a nice touch."